


Step-by-Step Guide to Clarify Your Most Important Values and Set Goals that Matter to You



Family
What sort of brother/sister, son/daughter, aunt/uncle do you want to be? What personal qualities do you want to bring to family relationships?

Couple
What sort of partner do you want to be? What type of relationship do you want? How do you approach an intimate relationship if you are your "ideal" self?

Parenting
What type of parent do you want to be? How do you behave as this type of parent?

Friendship
What qualities do you want to bring to your friendships? What type of friendships do you want to build?

Career
What do you value in your work? What would make it more meaningful? What type of worker do you want to be?

Personal Growth
What new skills or knowledge would you like to gain?

Leisure
What hobbies or leisure activities do you enjoy? How do you unwind or have fun? What types of activities would you like to do?

Spirituality and/or Religion
How do you want to express religion and/or spirituality?

Community and/or Citizenship
How would you like to contribute to your community? What sort of environment would you like to create at home or at work?

Health and Well-Being
How do you want to take care of yourself and your health? Why is this important to you?

Values Clarification

STEP 1: Clarify Your Values:

1. Review the 10 values above, then list the top 3 in the blank table below. You may add one if it is not listed, but the above are the most common ones. Choose the values you feel most compelled to clarify and improve **right now**. Not choosing a value does not mean it is not important to you, just that it is not a major area of focus now. For example, you might feel good about how things are going in your career, or with your spirituality, and therefore not list it because it isn't an area you feel compelled to significantly change or improve right now.
2. Write the value area in the **Value** column (e.g., Parenting, Marriage).
3. In the **Description** column, write a 1-2 sentence description of the value about how you would like to be in that area of your life (e.g., "I want to be a present and loving partner who is supportive and accepting" or "I want to set an example for my children of how to balance a career I'm passionate about, while also taking care of myself and being present with them").
4. In the **Rating** column, rate your current performance in each area from 1-10. How well are you living out this value right now?

- a. 1 indicates that your behaviors are very inconsistent with your values (e.g., you value your health and well-being, but are rarely taking time to go to medical visits, aren't eating well, and aren't exercising regularly)
- b. 10 means you are doing absolutely everything you can to live out this value
- c. A 5 would mean you are acting in accordance with your value about half of the time

STEP 2: Set Goals Based on Your Values:

1. Once you've established your top valued areas, you can now set 1-2 specific goals for your values.
2. Goals should be **SMART**:
 - a. **Specific**: Has a clear description of what you want to accomplish
 - i. No: Eat more vegetables
 - ii. Yes: Add vegetables to breakfast at least 3 days per week
 - b. **Measurable**: Includes clear metric that helps define success
 - i. No: Meditate
 - ii. Yes: Meditate at least 5 minutes, 4 days per week
 - c. **Attainable**: Make it challenging, but realistic and do-able
 - i. No: Currently you aren't exercising at all, and you set a goal to do so 6 days per week for an hour
 - ii. Yes: Start with a more realistic goal (maybe 3 days per week depending on your circumstances) and go from there
 - d. **Relevant**: Make sure it's consistent with what is important to you and should be a priority at this time
 - i. We only have so many hours in the day, so make sure most of your goals and habits are moving the needle on your most important goals. Getting clear on your top values should already help with this part.
 - e. **Time Sensitive**: Set a date for when the goal should be achieved
 - i. This can be short-term (e.g., weekly goal), medium-term (e.g., monthly or quarterly) or long-term (yearly), however, at least some of the goals should be shorter-term so that you can get clear on what habits need to change immediately, since this is key for long-term success.
 - ii. Choose a time frame that feels do-able but is also exciting to you.
3. Reminder: The value is the direction you want to go (e.g., be a more supportive friend) and the goal is the specific behavior consistent with that value (e.g., send a text to my two closest friends to check in at least once per week). Here are a few more examples.

Value	Goal(s)
Keeping my family as healthy as possible	1) Grocery shop at least once per week 2) Limit eating out to once during the week, and once per weekend
Work towards financial security to free up the ability to do work I am passionate about	1) Save 10% of my income for retirement this year 2) Track spending on food and use results to set a realistic limit on non-grocery food expenses
Be present with my children and engage in learning alongside them	1) Take them to at least 2 zoos this year, and 1 aquarium

Value	Description	Rating (1-10)	Goals (1-2 specific goals)

STEP 3: Dig Deeper on Your Top Value to Discover the Reasons that Really Motivate You

1. The above table should now be completed with 3-6 goals that are related to your most important values.
2. I'm going to ask you to do one final step to increase your chances of staying motivated for these goals over the long-term. I want you to dig even deeper to clarify the reason these values are important to you. I suggest you do this just for one top area for now, and really get clear on why it matters to you. Put a star by the value that is most important to you.
3. Enter the value on the blank line below. For example, you might write "5 reasons I value developing healthier eating and exercise behaviors"

4. Next, I want you to really dig deep here. See example script below of some questions to ask yourself:
 - a. You: "I value my health."
 - b. Me: "Why is your health so important to you?"
 - c. You: I want to live a long healthy life."
 - d. Me: "Ok, and why is that important?"
 - e. You: "I want to be able to live my life to the fullest potential, and not allow my health to hold me back from anything I want to do."
 - f. Me: "Great, are there ways your health holds you back now? What specifically do you want to change?"
5. Write the top 5 reasons that really get you excited. Bring up emotion and/or the deepest "whys" you can come up with and write them in the table below.
6. Print this list or re-write somewhere you can review it regularly (e.g., the bathroom mirror, the fridge, a journal you review each morning before starting your day, a note/alarm on your phone).

5 Reasons I Value _____

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.